

Orientation Introduces New Parents To IDS-CC Learning Environment

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At an orientation evening held for parents new to Independent Day School-Corbett Campus (IDS-CC) prior to the beginning of the school year, participants listened to presentations concerning the types of things you would expect to hear about at an orientation: volunteer opportunities, the Parent Faculty Association, the lunch program, fundraisers and annual giving, to name just a few.

The evening began, however, in a less traditional way.

With parents sitting as students do for an assembly, on the bleachers inside Corbett Hall, IDS-CC Headmaster Dr. Joyce Burick Swarzman welcomed them and immediately involved them, albeit unknowingly, in a demonstration of the approach to learning teachers at the school use every day.

After testing parents' ability to stay engaged in her initial presentation, which was purposefully wrought with tedious overheads and lengthy explanations, Swarzman asked parents to admit if they had indulged in what she called a mental "mini vacation" – a lapse of attention many in the audience candidly admitted they had taken.

"Mini vacations are a natural phenomenon in how the brain works," she explained. "Our teachers are masterful at gently bringing students back on task and re-engaging them in the learning process. And as we all know, more time on task equals more learning and increased student achievement and success."

Swarzman involved parents in a number of the techniques teachers use to create a brain friendly environment, including Kagan structures such as "sticky hi-fives," providing participants with the opportunity to model techniques rather than listening to a lecture. "These are just a few of the hundreds of structures IDS teachers use to accelerate the learning process, decrease mini vacations and increase time on task," she explained. "They go to the heart of our brain-based educational philosophy."

The orientation session introduces parents new to the school to the language and culture at IDS-CC that is based on respect for learning, continuous study of the most current research on how the brain works best, and integration of best practices in education.

"At IDS-CC, we are totally focused on creating a dynamic learning community," said Swarzman. "This community includes individuals, teachers, students and parents, in addition to all the people who come from around the world to learn with us."

Founded in 1968, Independent Day School-Corbett Campus is a fully accredited, independent school located on Orange Grove Drive in northwest Hillsborough County with 550 students from PreK3 through 8th grade. At IDS, all children experience learning in a nurturing and highly academic environment focused on excellence and developing a positive self-concept. IDS-CC has become recognized as an exemplary school with over 3,000 visitors observing and learning from and with IDS-CC teachers. For more information about IDS visit www.idsyves.com.

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